

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10

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R 221638 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2087

DOD WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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DOD FOR ISA

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

KUWAIT PASS MUSCAT

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, MU, YE, YS, TP

SUBJECT: ARABIAN PENINSULA DISCUSSION WITH BRITISH

SUMMARY: ISA DEPT ASST SECTY NOYES EXCHANGED VIEWS ON
ARABIAN PENINSULA WITH FCO ASST UNDERSECTY PARSONS AND
ME DEPT HEAD WRIGHT ON JUNE 20. BRITISH INDICATED THEY
SEE LITTLE CHANCE OF MILITARY OR POLITICAL SOLUTION TO
DHOFAR REBELLION IN OMAN ANYTIME SOON BUT ARE ENCOURAGED
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BY EFFECTS OF VISIBLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THERE AND BY RECENT CRACKDOWN ON PFLOAG ORGANIZATION THROUGHOUT GULF AREA. BRITISH THINK SOUTH- NORTH YEMENI RELATIONS ALSO LIKELY TO ROCK ALONG MORE OR LESS AS AT PRESENT BUT FAVOR SOME ASSISTANCE TO YAR MILITARY. NOYES COMMENTED US MAP PROGRAM APPEARS HIGHLY UNLIKELY IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. END SUMMARY.

1. REGARDING OMAN, BRITISH EXPRESSED OPINION MILITARY SOLUTION IMPOSSIBLE AT PRESENT. IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE ONLY IN UNLIKELY EVENT OF EITHER (A) RADICAL CHANGE FOR THE BETTER IN SOUTH YEMENI REGIME OR (B) SAUDI SUCCESS IN CARVING OFF HADRAMAUT PROVINCE FROM SOUTH YEMEN MILITARILY. SHOULD SOUTH YEMENI ASSISTANCE TO DHOFAR REBELS END THAT WOULD PROBABLY SPELL SHORT SHRIFT FOR REBELLION.

2. BRITISH EQUALLY DOUBTFUL ON POSSIBILITY OF ENDING REBELLION THROUGH POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT SULTAN QABUS, WHOSE FAMILY IS HALF DHOFARI, WOULD OFFER REBELS INDEPENDENT DHOFAR, AND IF HE EVER DID THAT WOULD PROBABLY SPELL BEGINNING OF THE END FOR QABUS ANYWAY. PARSONS WAS NOT MORE SPECIFIC ON ALTERNATIVES TO INDEPENDENCE, AND CONVERSATION TOOK ANOTHER TURN.

3. PRESENT MILITARY OUTLOOK REASONABLY SATISFACTORY AND, IN BRITISH ESTIMATION, REPRESENTS IMPROVEMENT OVER PAST. WHILE PFLOAG POLITICAL INDOCTRINATION IS PROBABLY NOT VERY IMPORTANT FACTOR IN DHOFAR AREA, WHERE TRIBAL INFLUENCES AND ANIMOSITIES PREDOMINATE, PFLOAG IS DIRECT OUTGROWTH OF ARAB NATIONALIST MOVEMENT AND AS SUCH REPRESENTS FOCUS OF ANTI- MONARCHIC, ANTI- TRADITIONALIST, AND (IN CASE OF PFLOAG) LARGELY ANTI- WESTERN SENTIMENTS THROUGHOUT ARABIAN PENINSULA AND GULF. THEREFORE BRITISH ARE ENCOURAGED BY SERIES OF REVERSES SUFFERED BY PFLOAG CELLS ELSEWHERE IN AREA RECENTLY. FCO OFFICIALS CITED WHOLESALERE ARREST OF PFLOAG ACTIVISTS IN NORTHERN OMAN (OF WHOM 11 EXECUTED JUNE 20 AND REST COMMUTED TO PRISON SENTENCES, ACCORDING TO PARSONS) AND ANTI- PFLOAG SECURITY ACTION IN ABU DHABI. WRIGHT POINTED OUT PFLOAG CELLS HAVE BEEN PRETTY WELL CLEARED OUT OF BAHRAIN AND EVEN KUWAITIS HAVE RECENTLY EXPELLED A NUMBER OF PFLOAG

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ACTIVISTS. ALL THIS SHOULD REDUCE PFLOAG EFFECTIVENESS AT LEAST TEMPORARILY.

4. MAIN HOPE FOR IMPROVEMENT IN OMAN, BRITISH FEEL, IS VISIBLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, WHILE MILITARY KEEP DHOFAR REBELS IN CHECK. THEY HAVE IMPRESSION EVEN LIMITED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE IN SALALAH AREA

HAS BEGUN TO AFFECT REBEL MORALE AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR INCREASING DEFECTIONS. HOWEVER, PARSONS AND WRIGHT ADMITTED HARD INFO IS SCARCE AND MUCH OF THEIR EVALUATION HAS TO BE PUT INTO CATEGORY OF INFORMED SPECULATION.

5. IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION ON PDRY RELATIONS WITH YEMEN AND SAUDI ARABIA, FCO OFFICIALS MADE IT CLEAR THEY EXPECTED THINGS TO ROCK ALONG MORE OR LESS AS AT PRESENT. SOUTH YEMENIS, WHO ARE A PRETTY TOUGH, WELL- ORGANIZED

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LOT ANYWAY, KNOW SAUDIS ARE OUT TO GET THEM AND THIS INCREASES THEIR COHESIVENESS. THEY ALSO WANT TO AVOID

YEMEN UNITY ON NORTH YEMENI TERMS AND WILL MANEUVER UNITY TALKS AND MILITARY SITUATION ACCORDINGLY. AT SAME TIME, BRITISH THINK PRESENT SAUDI REGIME IS UNLIKELY EVER TO ASSIST IN BUILDING A STRONG, UNIFIED YEMEN BUT WILL PERSIST IN PRESENT POLICY OF HELPING YARG BARELY KEEP ITS HEAD ABOVE WATER. FOR ALL THESE REASONS BRITISH DO NOT EXPECT YEMEN UNITY SOON OR, ALTERNATIVELY, ANY WIDE-SPREAD OR DECISIVE MILITARY SHOWDOWN BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH YEMEN. FOR ONE THING, THEY POINT OUT, FCO HAS BEEN TOLD BY FORMER YARG PM EL- AINY, WHO IS PRESENT AMBASSADOR IN LONDON, THAT THERE ARE MANY MIDDLE LEVEL OFFICERS IN YARG ARMY WHO ARE COMMITTED TO MODERNIZING AIMS SHARED

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BY SOUTH YEMENI REGIME AND ARE UNHAPPY WITH PRESENT CONFRONTATION WHICH THEY SEE AS PUSHING NORTH YEMEN CLOSER INTO THE SAUDI EMBRACE.

6. PARSONS AND WRIGHT WERE A BIT VAGUE ON CHINESE AND SOVIET INFLUENCE IN AREA. WRIGHT REVEALED THAT CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER HAD RECENTLY TOLD FONSEC DOUGLAS- HOME THAT CHINESE TRIED TO GET PDY TO REDUCE ITS RELIANCE ON SOVIETS, BUT WITH LITTLE EFFECT. WRIGHT FELT CHINESE INFLUENCE STILL EXISTS IN PDY AND WITH DHOFAR REBELS. HE CITED EVIDENCE OF CHINESE INDOCTRINA INDOCTRINATION, THOUGH HE ADMITTED THIS COULD HAVE OCCURRED THROUGH TRAINING OF SOME CADRES IN CHINA RATHER THAN AS RESULT OF CHINESE PRESENCE IN PDY.

7. BY SAME TOKEN BRITISH SUSPECT YARG HAS REFRAINED FROM SEVERING ITS TIES WITH SOVIETS AS BOTH A LEVER AND AN INSURANCE POLICY IN YARG DEALINGS WITH THE WEST. PARSONS SAID HE MAY BE EXPRESSING SOMEWHAT OUTDATED IDEAS BUT IN HIS ESTIMATION SOVIET PRESENCE IN YAR IS A CONTINUING DANGER DESPITE LOW LEVEL OF SOVIET INFLUENCE THERE TO ALL PRESENT APPEARANCES. BRITISH FAVOR GREATER ASSISTANCE TO YAR ARMED FORCES TO INCREASE THEIR EFFECTIVENESS EVEN THOUGH THEY RECOGNIZE YAR MILITARY HAVE LIMITED CAPACITY TO ABSORB SIZEABLE QUANTITIES OF NEW EQUIPMENT. PARSONS NOTED NOYES COMMENT THAT US MAP PROGRAM FOR YAR SEEMS OUT OF THE QUESTION IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. HE SAID NOYES' S GUESS WAS AS GOOD AS HIS AS TO THE EXTENT OF MILITARY AID THAT THE SAUDIS MAY BE WILLING TO PROVIDE. HE NOTED BRITISH EFFORTS ARE SIMILARLY LIMITED BY FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CIRCUMSCRIBED BY RELUCTANCE TO ESTABLISH OBVIOUS BRITISH PRESENCE IN YEMEN. HOWEVER, HE DOWNPLAYED POSSIBLE DANGER OF TOO QUICK A BUILD- UP IN YAR ARMY (WITH ITS RELATIVELY RADICAL OFFICERS) ON BASIS THAT CONSERVATIVE TRIBES MAINTAIN MILITARY CAPACITY AT LEAST EQUAL TO, IF NOT GREATER THAN, THAT OF YAR ARMY.

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